



Published on *The American Task Force on Palestine* (<http://www.americantaskforce.org>)

[Home](#) > [Printer-friendly PDF](#) > [Printer-friendly PDF](#)

The one-, two-, five-state solutions

The Jordan Times

March 12, 2009 - 11:00pm

<http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=14999> ^[1]

March 13, 2009

Media Outlet: The Jordan Times

Date: March 13, 2009

Source Link(s): <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=14999> ^[1]

We enjoy the counting game when it comes to the Arab-Israeli conflict, hypothesising about the number of states that must be created to end this conflict.

The one-state solution is an idea coming from part of the Palestinian liberal elite that calls for one state for two nations: Israelis and Palestinians. The idea is rejected by Israelis as political suicide because demographic trends will mean a Palestinian-dominated state in 20 years or so.

The three-state solution, advocated by John Bolton, is equally provocative. It calls for solving the Arab-Israeli conflict by divvying up Palestinian land between Jordan and Egypt. These two countries would fulfill the international community's expectation that Israel's security be protected while maintaining the well-being of the Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza. Jordan and Egypt view this solution as contrary to their interests. Indeed, it would place the brunt of the political and economic burdens on them. It is also provocative because it is reminiscent of past Orientalist policies that viewed Arab states as simply space on the map, not autonomous political actors with their own interests.

The five-state solution is promoted by Thomas Friedman, who is also one of the architects of the Saudi peace initiative. Friedman's plan requires close cooperation between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Saudi Arabia. Jordan and Egypt would ensure security in the West Bank and Gaza, while Saudi Arabia would be the financier of their efforts. This proposal is also rejected by Jordan and Egypt because they would be seen by fellow Arabs as undermining Palestinian aspirations for statehood.

The Obama administration seems aware of the motivations and shortcomings of the above-mentioned proposals and has made a two-state solution the 'inevitable' strategy for peace. This contrasts with the Bush administration's approach, which viewed the two-state solution as the 'vision of the president'.

The one-, three- and five-state proposals foolishly overstate the impact that outside actors can have in an essentially regional conflict. It also downplays the differing interests and political autonomy of states in the region. Most importantly, it underestimates the importance of achieving the Palestinian goal of self-determination and national independence.

In the near-term, the key obstacle to the two-state solution is likely to be the Netanyahu government. US President Barack Obama is expected to make achieving a two-state solution a priority for his administration and, therefore, Netanyahu will be challenged as he is forced to accommodate the expectations of both Israel's most influential supporter and the Israelis, who expect a continuation of his traditionally hardline politics.

Success will only be possible if the Obama administration is willing to engage vigorously, preferably to adopt a Baker-Bush Sr. approach that will not only work to bring conflicting parties together but also engage them in the details.

The writer is assistant professor at the Political Science Department, Yarmouk University. He contributed this article to The Jordan Times.

TAGS:

[Events](#) | [Daily News](#) | [About Us](#) | [Resources](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Donate](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

[!\[\]\(de95854c7ee024cfadc48187bbb781b2_img.jpg\) Front Page Features](#) [!\[\]\(cef08d8c15d8a8acd5e25ab0d65432c3_img.jpg\) World Press Roundup](#) [!\[\]\(c244836fd67166dc60ebf5279a0f8377_img.jpg\) ATFP in the News](#) [!\[\]\(c9651b690bdf1dda88278b8b3445c7b1_img.jpg\) Policy and Analysis](#)
[!\[\]\(3edfc2ea96443450a4381cfaba839e65_img.jpg\) Briefing Summaries](#)

Source URL (retrieved on Feb 16 2020 - 8:07pm):

http://www.americantaskforce.org/daily_news_article/2009/03/13/1236916800_3

Links:

[1] <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=14999>